

The Bloomfield Record.

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A "Fake" Legal Opinion of a "Fake" Editorial?

"YOU PAY YOUR MONEY AND YOU TAKE YOUR CHOICE."

Two weeks ago THE BLOOMFIELD RECORD published an article entitled "Illegal Assessments." The object of its publication was, to enlighten the public, and especially the taxpayers of Bloomfield, in regard to the costliness, the unfairness, of the litigation against the borough, likely to ensue from the instructions given to assess property in Glen Ridge, placing the same illegally in the township tax books, figuring the general tax levy upon that basis, and sending out tax bills demanding payment accordingly. All this has been done by the joint action of the Bloomfield Associates, Township Committee and Collector. We pronounce this action just what it is—illegal—stating facts as they appear without denouncing anybody. This has been done by the Citizen, printed editorially as follows:

A FAKE LEGAL OPINION.

"The borgholites do not hesitate to stoop to false statements to bolster up the cause of the borough, as note the following statement published last week and made to appear as if it emanated from Riker & Riker, a reputable Newark law firm:

"The opinion however is given by Messrs. Riker & Riker, Counsel for the Glen Ridge Borough, that the tax bills were illegal, done by the Bloomfield Township authorities, by which the assessments have been recorded in the Bloomfield tax books, placed in the Glen Ridge property owners' property, which condemns him, as an individual, to bring suit in the Court of Chancery against Bloomfield Township and the assessors, who remains a man against his property. The Glen Ridge Borough officials, however, do not take this into account, and do not against the borough collectively. For the tax payer who does not want to pay double to both Township and Borough—Collector, and the like, the tax bills are set aside by the court. As there will be hundreds of thousands of cases, and all of them alike, the expense of instituting suits will be borne by each and the expense of the suits will be borne by the court. Every will be about \$40 in each case we are informed, and thus in the aggregate will amount to several thousand dollars. This will have to be borne by Bloomfield taxpayers, as a result of the expense which are being heated up by Bloomfield's alleged "Counsel" in the fight against the Borough.

"No such nonsense ever emanated from the office of Riker & Riker. If there were several hundred cases of precisely a similar character, what object would there be in contesting each case when the first one would establish a precedent?

"Erroneous assessments are occasionally erased from the tax books by direction of the Township Committee without occasioning the aggrieved party to have recourse to the Court of Chancery. Where taxes have been illegally collected in the past they have been refunded to the payer and recovered without expense either to the payer or the township. If zealous borgholites want to explore their legal knowledge they should do it under their own names and no resort to means that are likely to bring reputable lawyers into disrepute.

There is nothing anonymous in the "legal knowledge" above quoted from THE RECORD. The editor consulted nobody, neither borough counsel nor borough official, was paid nothing for "exploiting" the opinion, expects no reward for expressing it but the fairly earned good will of the people of both Glen Ridge and Bloomfield, whose welfare this paper is endeavoring impartially to serve. Nothing is charged for the opinion, then, and now freely expressed as an opinion of an American citizen, untrifled by partisan intimation, that not only was the assessment of Glen Ridge by Bloomfield officials illegal, but also that the assessment of Bloomfield, if not illegal, was a political-financial blunder that will cost the 40,000 taxpayers dearly, and in the outcome relegate Counsel and Committee who upheld it to the obscurity and disgrace that they courted and have fairly earned.

There is no danger that any *reputable* lawyer will be brought into disrepute by any statements made in THE RECORD. But there is great danger that legal quackery, editorial trickery and political knavery will be exposed, and we mean that it shall be, if possible.

The article we have quoted from THE CITIZEN unmistakably emanated from somebody employed by Bloomfield Township as "counsel" in some capacity. They evidently felt it necessary to print and circulate something to counteract what we said concerning the illegal assessment of Glen Ridge property, do it at the instigation of Bloomfield's "alleged self."

It should be noted that while there

is an artful dodging of the issue from illegal assessments to "erroneous assessments," care is taken not to deny that the attempted taxing of Glen Ridge property was illegal and can only be rectified by due process of law. It should also be noted that in pretending to quote a paragraph from THE RECORD they garbled it to deceive their readers, cutting out very heart of the indictment, which could not be denied, that this particular phase of the fight on the part of Bloomfield officials was against individuals, not against the borough.

The reply to our article can only be construed as being an effort of *somebody*—to throw the people of Bloomfield off the scent and prevent the exposure that is opening up.

Confident as we are that neither "reputable lawyers" nor any honest truth-speak collector will be injured, we are perfectly willing to assume (for the sake of argument only) that THE RECORD is a base, mendacious sheet, given to making false statements, and that its opponents in the article quoted above, is a paragon of truth and virtue. What does that assumption lead to? Simply this: That the "counsel" must have given a decidedly "fake legal opinion" on the 12th of August last, when Mr. Hulphenny informed the Township Committee that they had no power to remit taxes assessed upon a certain property.

We cannot prove this statement by deadly parallel from the columns of the printed mouthpiece of the Township and Council (for they saw it fit to leave the opinion out of the newspaper that they gave to the public August 17th) but in the report in THE RECORD of August 16th appeared this item of important general information:

"In regard to the assessment of 1894 of the Sprague Electric Elevator Works at Watseka, Counsel reported that the Committee had no power to make a reduction."

But wait a moment! We forgot the assumption that THE RECORD is not to be believed; and that this may also be pronounced a "false statement to bolster up the cause of the borough." We therefore produce in evidence the wording of the Township minutes relating to the proceedings in the same matter:

"Counsel reported that the Committee have no power to remit taxes as applied for by the Sprague Elevator Works, and on motion the Clerk was instructed to re-set the minutes.

We now ask Bloomfield's Leading Counselor, who is likewise understood by common fame to be boss of what goes out to the public in print, certain or otherwise, from a certain quarter, which horn of the dilemma he prefers to impale himself upon?

PERPETUAL MOTION MACHINES

The Ever Failing, Never Ending Search For Such Marvelous Contrivances.

Close allied to the periodically recurring claims for the production of perpetual motion are the class of exhibitions which have been profitable to their inventors by organizing companies through active promoters, upon evidence, for instance, that a few drops of water can produce a pressure of 10,000 pounds per square inch, as though the power of the sun's rays were the performance of a useful amount of work.

Again, there is the line of pseudo experimentation, based upon the oft-repeated assertion that harmony of sound can set up such motion as to produce large mechanical effects, such as the rotation of machines, or even explosive power in gunpowder, all such devices as may be considered as perpetual motion machines, for in such cases the power manifested is much greater than that required for its initiation, and it must follow that the machine, after supplying itself with such initiatory excitement, will have much surplus of energy left over for useful purposes if the facts are as stated, and such machines as have been devised for the promoters, but has not yet so far revealed as to render feasible the construction of machines of practical use and commercial value.

The means to carry on exhibitions of such reputed inventions are obtained from widely scattered sources. Gentlemen who have furnished the capital or are not interested in the expense of the frauds or do not realize that advantage is being taken of their credibility, while those who are not pecuniarily interested are afforded no opportunity to prove the correctness of their assertions, as the following of which schemes is much too easy, as the ordinary tendency of the human mind is to believe of that remarkable results may be obtained from modern scientific methods. This faith leads many to venture at least small investments, in the hope that large returns will be realized. If these temporal gains will continue to exist, a long, fatuous reason is dominant in many minds.—Professor Cole and Sons in Cassier's Magazine.

Unhappiness

They who have never known prosperity can hardly be said to be unhappy; it is from the remembrance of joys we have lost that the arrows of affliction are pointed.—Emile Zola.

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE.

The regular meeting of the Township Committee was held on Monday night. All the members were present.

The following bills were ordered paid: Henry Thompson, Janitor of Police Station, \$4.25; Bloomfield Boarding and Livery Stable, police account, \$57.50; Police officers' salaries for September, five, \$60 each; Class Hummel, salary and extra work \$60.20; John Weden, special officer, \$14; Samuel Peloquet, hardware supplies, \$6.25; M. Roberts, for care of Mrs. Bounell, \$22.50; Bloomfield Boarding and Livery stables, \$6; C. L. Voorhees, Poormaster, \$66.66.

Dr. J. P. Scherf, medicina, poor account, \$6.05; New York and New Jersey Telephone Co., \$18.55. This bill created some discussion. Mr. Stout and Mr. Haskell both said that something should be done to check the free use of the telephone at the police station and also at the committee rooms. Lyon & Co., for decorating the City Hall for Firemen's Day, \$10; Postmaster Frank G. Tower, stamped envelopes, \$25.80; Gustav Breuer, moving and placing fire alarm pole, \$4; Mr. Stout and Mr. Fisher said that this charge was exorbitant. This bill was referred back to the Fire Committee and Chief Oakes. Then Hayes, janitor of City Hall, salary, \$10.20; Thomas B. Baxter, acknowledgments of tax bills, \$21.50; A. C. Marr, salary account, \$100; E. D. Ackerman, cleaning city hall furnace, \$75 cents; Horace Dodd, three months rent, \$112.50; William L. Johnson, clock, salary, \$62.50; Bloomfield National Bank, interest on sewer bonds, \$234.86; Theo. Cadmus, building tool box, \$9; Walter Lane, sewer inspector, salary, \$60; Bloomfield National Bank, \$45.37; Bloomfield National Bank, \$654.68; E. D. Ackerman, sewer connections, \$105.60; 5% Sewer inspectors, \$165; Wm. W. Trout, 36 sewer pails, \$35.62; A. H. Olmsted, 5% per cent on sewer construction, \$500. A. H. Olmsted, relocating monument stones, \$150.

Mr. Stout called for an explanation in regard to this bill. He desired to know whether this included the cost of re-setting the monument stones.

Mr. Olmsted said that it would not. He said that he intended to re-set them within the sidewalk line about three feet from the fence. There are about 80 monument stones to be re-set.

Mr. Haskell said that a number of property owners had objected to having the monument stones cut up for this purpose.

Mr. Fisher of the road committee reported that its work was completed and that the men employed on the roads had been discharged with the exception of Superintendent Oakes.

Mr. Oakes was retained as Superintendent of Public Works until May 1st, 1896, at a salary of \$20 per month.

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